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SENATE BILL 5517

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State of Washington                      60th Legislature                      2007 Regular Session

By Senators Berkey, Kauffman, Haugen, Eide, Kastama, Schoesler, Shin, Hatfield, Keiser, Rasmussen, Kline and Regala

Read first time 01/23/2007. Referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

1            AN ACT Relating to increasing the personal needs allowance for  
2 persons receiving state-financed care; adding a new section to chapter  
3 74.09 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that through the  
6 medicaid program, state and federal government fund long-term care and  
7 medical services for many elderly persons and people with disabilities,  
8 both in institutions and in community alternatives. The legislature  
9 also finds that a significant portion of these individuals' social  
10 security benefits is retained by the state to assist with the cost of  
11 their care. The legislature intends that these individuals retain for  
12 their own use a reasonable personal needs allowance which may be used  
13 to purchase clothing, postage, barber services, travel, and other  
14 personal items not covered by their care setting, in order to ensure  
15 their autonomy and dignity.

16            (2) It is the intent of the legislature to establish a minimum  
17 level for the personal needs allowance, make it equal between  
18 institutional and community-based settings, and adjust the personal

1 needs allowance annually to reflect cost-of-living adjustments to  
2 federal social security benefits.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.09 RCW  
4 to read as follows:

5 (1) Effective July 1, 2007, the personal needs allowance for  
6 residents of congregate care facilities such as nursing facilities,  
7 residential habilitation centers, and state hospitals shall be an  
8 amount not less than sixty-eight dollars and eighty-four cents per  
9 month, but not more than the maximum amount allowed under the federal  
10 social security act.

11 (2) Effective July 1, 2007, the personal needs allowance for  
12 medicaid-eligible residents of adult family homes, boarding homes,  
13 assisted living, adult residential care, enhanced adult residential  
14 care, and group homes for adults with developmental disabilities shall  
15 be an amount not less than sixty-eight dollars and eighty-four cents  
16 per month. This amount per month should be the combined total of the  
17 personal needs allowance and any earnings disregard already allowed by  
18 the department of social and health services.

19 (3) Effective July 1, 2008, and each fiscal year thereafter, the  
20 personal needs allowance shall be adjusted for economic trends and  
21 conditions by increasing the allowance by the cost-of-living adjustment  
22 for old-age, survivors, and disability social security benefits as  
23 published by the federal social security administration. However, in  
24 no case shall the personal needs allowance exceed the maximum personal  
25 needs allowance permissible under the federal social security act.

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